

The Process of Digital Storytelling in the Classroom

The process of creating a digital story in the classroom follows steps similar to creating any large scale technology project, but includes some additional steps specific to both storytelling and digital storytelling.

Create Foundations

If the digital story will retell content students are learning in the classroom, they must know the content before they can begin the story. Digital storytelling is a way for students to apply knowledge about a curriculum topic, not learn it for the first time. They must have the foundational knowledge necessary to tell a compelling story using the information they have already learned.

Set Expectations

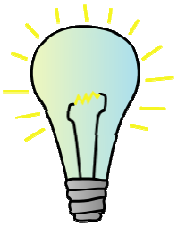
What does a great story look like? Sound like? Share high-quality examples that are similar to the stories you expect from students. There are many student-created samples online, but you may also refer to professional storytellers like Ken Burns.



Form Teams

Choose whether students are telling a personal story as an individual or working as a team to tell the story. If students are working in a team, they still need to ensure that the voice in the story comes from the perspective of one storyteller. They will need to agree on the vision for their story to make this a single voice.

Brainstorm Ideas



Often the key to a compelling story is not the content, but the way in which the story is told. Begin thinking about your story by brainstorming as many ideas about the content as possible. Then brainstorm ways you can share that content.

You want to begin a project with as many ideas as possible. Brainstorming is a great way to generate lots of ideas. A brainstorming session is only an ideas session. It is the time to think of and SAY everything that comes to mind. It is NOT a time to assess any of the ideas presented for feasibility, only possibility.

The project-building process moves from bigger to smaller, wider to narrower. Brainstorming helps you make the beginning as big as possible. The intention is not to come up with too many ideas that make a project impossible, but to open up the project to ALL the possibilities.

Develop a Vision

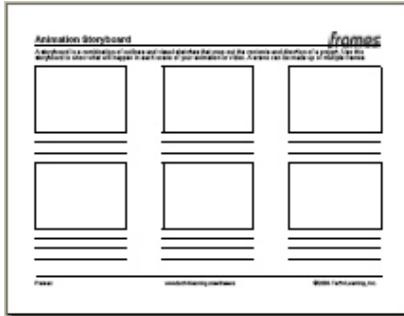
Brainstorming gives you many ideas, but your story will need a focus. Developing a vision will help you narrow your ideas and decide the best way to tell your story. *What is your goal for telling this story? What do you want audience members to know or feel after watching your story?*

Write the Narrative

Digital storytelling is about telling a personal story. Write a narrative that makes the voice of the storyteller clear. Try to be concise. While your story will have supporting visuals, each word should be carefully chosen to evoke in image in the mind of the viewer.

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Storyboard the Video



A storyboard is a combination of outlines and visual sketches, or representations, that map out the content and effects you will use in your story. The storyboard should be arranged to clearly show how you will use images, and other media to support the narrative. A storyboard is your blueprint for your video - it will be your guide as you locate resources and combine them to tell your story.

As you reread your narrative, where are natural breaks that act like scenes in a movie? Divide your narrative into these scenes and determine what visual and audio elements will support the content told. Developing a storyboard will help ensure that your narrative is focused, organized, and concise.

Gather Resources and Process Media

While you may have a photograph or artifact that is driving the creation of your story, many times your story will be written and planned before you begin gathering media. Collect your photographs and scan them, search the Internet for images to support your ideas, use a Paint or Imaging program to create pictures.

Build the Story

Use a software tool, like Frames or iMovie, to combine the resources you have gathered into a story that is meaningful. Remember, flashy features and multiple transitions should support the content of the story, not overshadow it. Record your written narrative. Then adjust the timing of the images, photographs, and pictures to match the content of the story. Save the story in a format you can place online or in a presentation.



Share the Story

Your story needs to be told! Share it in a small group or to a large auditorium audience. Place it on closed circuit television or a local access station. Put it on the web and visit news groups and blogs to get others to view it.

After others have watched your movie, get their feedback. Share you story of creating the movie. See if your story bring a personal story for them to the forefront.